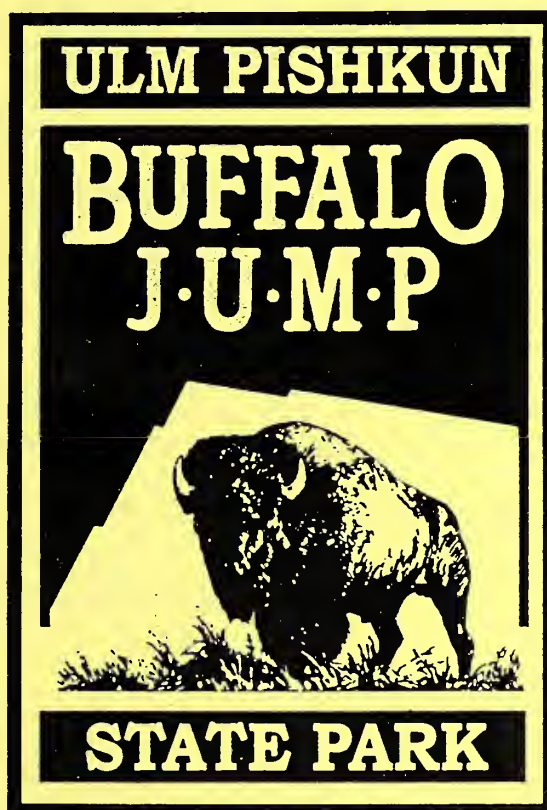


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MONTANA. DEPT. OF  
FISH, WILDLIFE,  
AND PARKS. REGION  
DRAFT  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ASSESSMENT FOR THE  
ULM PISHKUN



**Draft**  
**Environmental Assessment**  
  
for the  
  
**Ulm Pishkun Educational Visitor Center**  
**and**  
**Interpretive Improvement Project**



Prepared by  
Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks  
Parks Division  
Region Four

August 5, 1997

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# MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action

FWP proposes to develop an approximately 6000 square foot educational visitor center and its associated facilities at Ulm Pishkun State Park. Included in this project are parking lots for up to 100 vehicles, support facilities like an amphitheatre, and pow-wow grounds area, restrooms, interpretive trails and displays, and rehabilitation or removal of existing facilities at the park on top of the cliff.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action

FWP has authority to provide development and access for public recreation, 23-2-101 MCA.

3. Name of Project

Ulm Pishkun State Park Educational Visitor Center

4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)

Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Region Four, P.O. Box 6610, Great Falls, MT 59406

5. If Applicable:

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: October 15, 1997.

Estimated Completion Date: December 31, 1998.

Current Status of Project Design: (% complete) 5%

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)

T20N, R2E	Section 19 - N1/2.	- 308.75 Acres
	Section 18 - SE1/4 of the NW1/4	- <u>40</u> Acres
		348.75 Acres total







7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

(a) Developed:  
residential . . . . . 0 acres  
industrial . . . . . 0 acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/  
Recreation . . . . . 40 acres

(c) Wetlands/Riparian  
Areas . . . . . 0 acres

(d) Floodplain . . . . . 0 acres

(e) Productive:  
irrigated cropland 0  
dry cropland . . . . . 0 acres  
forestry . . . . . 0 acres  
rangeland . . . . . 308.75 acres  
other . . . . . 0 acres








8. **Map/site plan:** attach an original 8 ½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

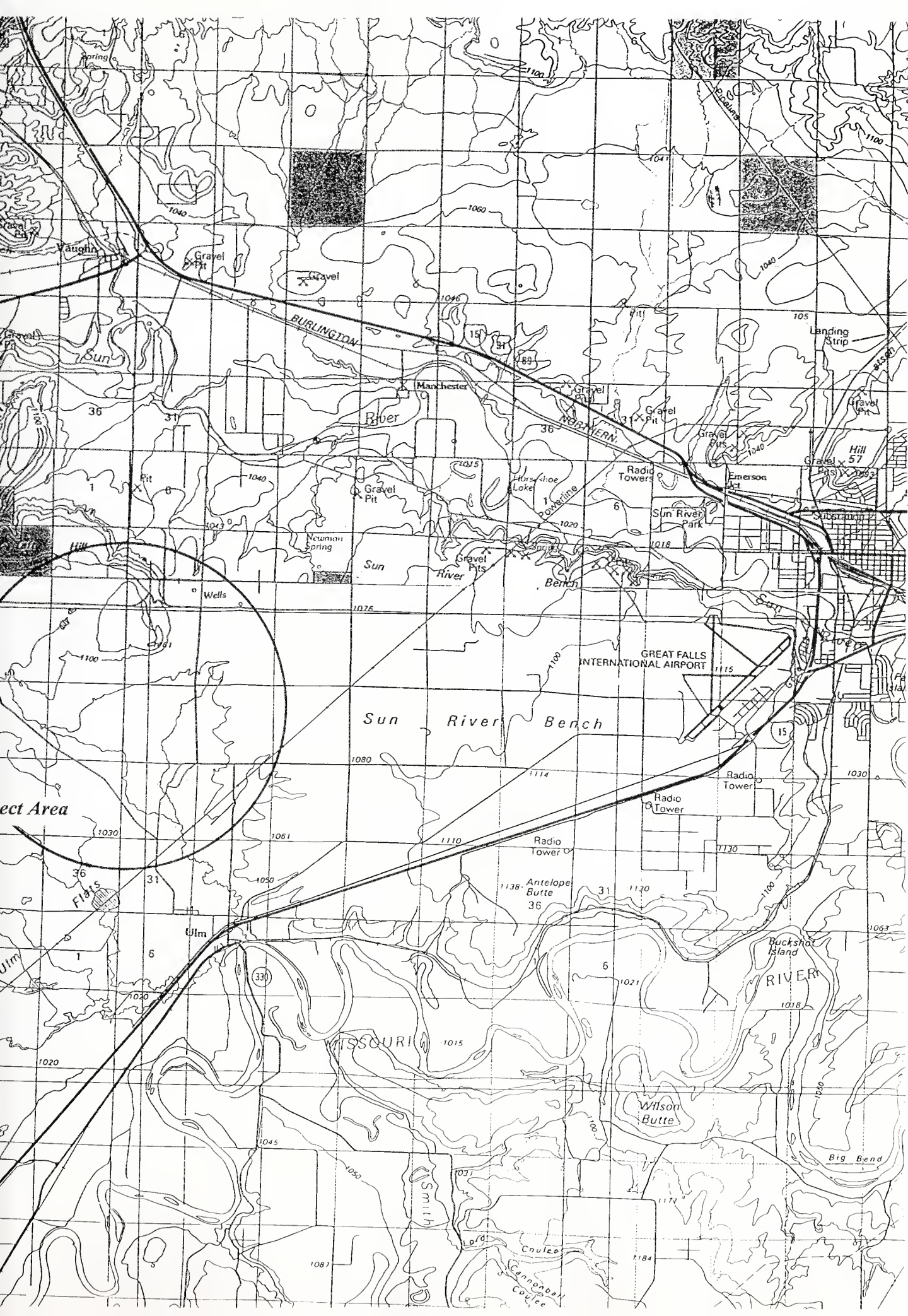
Attached.





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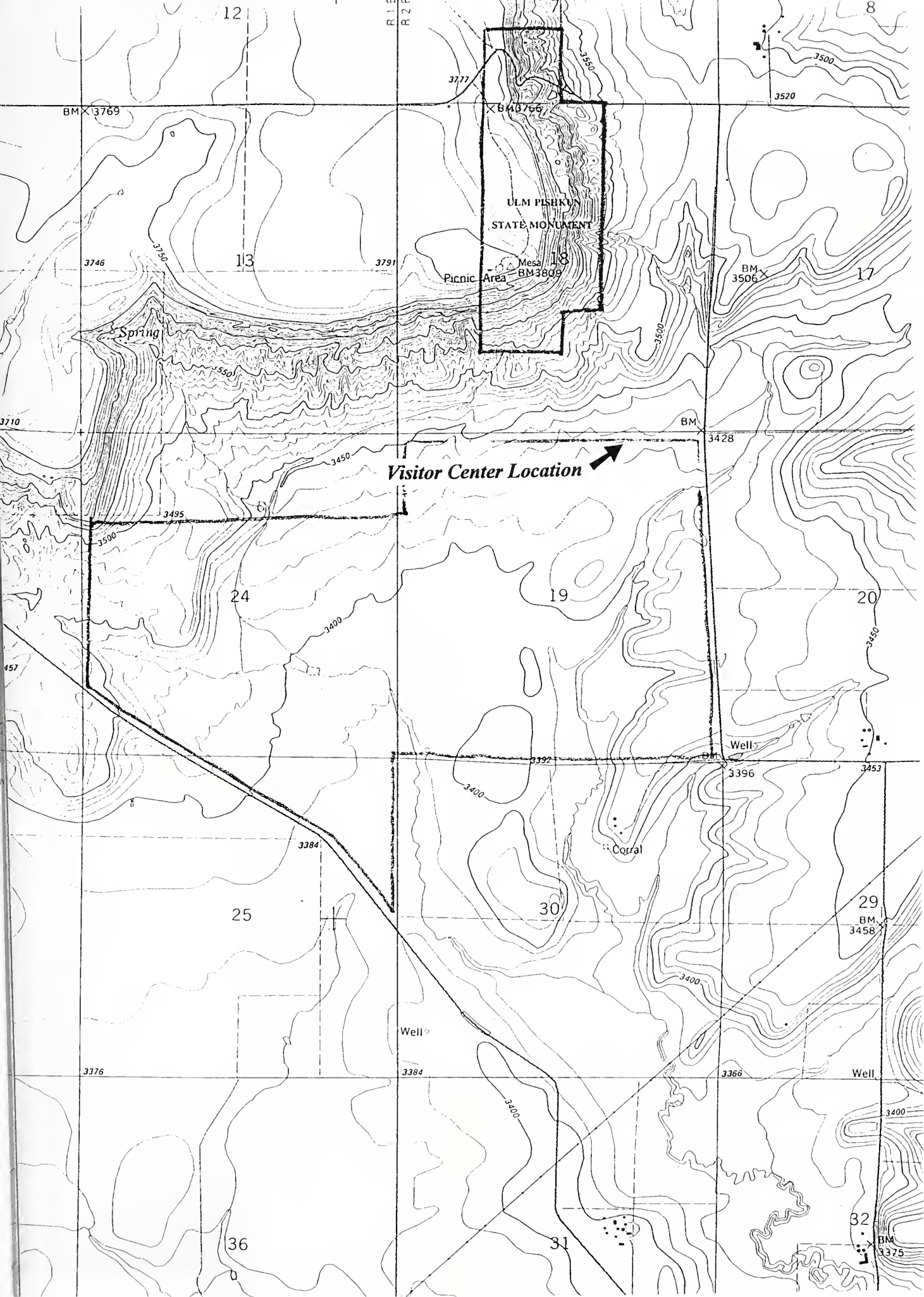


























**9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.**

FWP is proposing to develop an educational visitor center to educate the public of the importance of this site to Native Peoples and their relationship with the North American bison. Ulm Pishkun is arguably the largest example of a bison jump in North America and has outstanding opportunities for education and interpretation of the methods, practices, and traditions of using bison by many tribal groups.

The proximity of the interstate highway and food and lodging opportunities in nearby Great Falls gives the site potential for serving a wide variety of visitors. Great Falls has a high population of Urban Native Peoples and the site can provide insight into their tribal heritage. A major goal of the center is to build bridges between cultures through greater understanding of Native People traditions.

It is estimated that 22,000 school children live within a two hour drive of the site. This is a unique opportunity to interpret a variety of subjects from prehistory to modern settlement that spans literally thousands of years of human use of the site. This facility will be designed to aid in the passing of knowledge including tribal traditions and customs, and the archaeological record. Interpretive techniques likely to be used will include exhibits, demonstrations, pow-wows, story telling by Native Peoples, interpretive trails, etc.

This action considers constructing an approximate 6000 sq. ft. visitor center, trails and interpretive panels, small outdoor amphitheater, designated group use area (pow wows, etc.), and parking facilities with handicap access.

In the past FWP has attempted to interpret the area using small trails-based outdoor interpretive panels. The vagrancies of weather, and security issues have rendered this type of interpretive development less effective since people are not able to use the site seasonally or during times of inhospitable weather. A lack of FWP site presence has resulted in high vandalism to both FWP developments and the cultural deposits at the site. The development of the visitor center will result in higher FWP and public presence which will result in lower vandalism on the cultural deposits and developments due to increased awareness of the importance of this site and by increasing understanding by the local residents of the importance of this resource.

For over fifteen years various persons and interest groups have expressed interest in having more at the Ulm Pishkun. There has been a general dissatisfaction with the lack of facilities and interpretation at this unique cultural resource. Beginning in 1992, with a collaborative effort of the Cascade County Historical Society, MSU and FWP, a series of archaeological digs revealed that this buffalo jump has significance of being possibly the largest buffalo jump in North America. Consequently public demand began to grow resulting in the FWP beginning a public planning process in August, 1994. To begin this planning process meetings were held with Native People tribal representatives for focus and direction. At the initial public scoping meeting many public comments were received encouraging FWP that future developments should consider minimizing impact to the existing landscapes.







**10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

(a) Permits: Date  
Agency Name Permit Filed/#

DNRC-Trust Lands Mgmt. Div.	To be determined
State Dept of Comm.	State Building Permit
DEQ/Cascade County	Septic permit
SHPO	Cultural Resources Clearance
Cascade County Weed Board	County Weed Plan
Cascade County	Road approach permit
Cascade County/MDOT	Sign permits
DNRC	Water rights
State DEQ	Storm water permit (if over 5 acres)

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
FWP	\$2,013,000
Total	\$2,013,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:  
Agency Name Type of Responsibility

DNRC-TLMD Cultural Resource Protection

**11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:**

**State of Montana:**

Dept. of Fish Wildlife and Parks- Region Four:  
Parks, Wildlife, Conservation Education Divisions and the Regional Supervisor's office.

Dept. of Fish Wildlife and Parks	Parks Administration Office
Dept. of Fish Wildlife and Parks	Design and Construction Bureau
Dept. of Administration	Architecture and Engineering Bureau
Dept. of Commerce	Indian Tourism
Montana Historical Society	State Historic Preservation Office
Dept. of Nat. Res. & Con.	Trust Lands Mgmt. Division

**Consultants:**

Place Architecture Bozeman MT.  
PPI Interpretive consultants Portland OR.

**Other:**

Blackfeet Tribe	Honorary Council
Rocky Boy Res.	Pat Chief Stick, Cultural Committee Chairman
Ft. Belknap Res.	Ray Gone and Joe Ironman
Ft. Peck Res.	Curley Youpee, Cultural Committee Chairman
	Carl and Bob Fourstar
Salish-Kootenai Conf. Tribes	Tony Incashola, Cultural Committee Chairman







Loud Thunder Int.  
Cascade County Historical Society  
Great Falls Chamber of Commerce  
Great Falls School Dist.

Robert Gopher  
Great Falls MT.  
Great Falls MT.  
Great Falls MT.







## PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. LAND RESOURCES  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Minor impacts to the areas under development will occur. Most of these areas have been severely impacted by agricultural activities in the past and FWP will mitigate by re-establishment of native prairie grasses and forbs. The educational center building, parking lot and trails will affect nature of land and its drainage.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. AIR	IMPACT <sup>*</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>*</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>*</sup>	None	Minor <sup>*</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X			a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ♦ For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		X				
f. Other _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. Minor impacts during construction will occur. After construction is complete a small amount of impact will occur due to visitation.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







# **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

3. WATER	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		X				
m. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		X				
n. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

The proposed parking lot and short access road will change drainage pattern but this minor disturbance will not result in any negative impacts.

\* Note: we will put in a domestic water well.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			a.
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X			b.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?			X			d.
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X			e.
f. ♦♦For P-R/D-L, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- a. Some impacts will occur at building sites, and the potential for weed invasion is increased. FWP will manage the land in accordance with the 1997 Region Four Noxious Weed Management Plan. All disturbed lands will be reclaimed with a wide variety of native grasses and forbs.
- b. This land is in range and CRP at present, FWP will enhance the native vegetation through seeding native plants where and when appropriate.
- d. The lands proposed for development are currently out of production and were previously enrolled in the Federal CRP program. FWP has not re-enrolled this land and intends to reclaim the area by planting a native mixture of prairie grasses and forbs.
- e. FWP will manage the land in accordance with the 1997 Region Four Noxious Weed Management Plan. This plan emphasizes minimization of disturbance and reclaiming native prairie. An Integrated Weed management strategy is followed designed to manage noxious weeds using the most effective and environmentally safe methods.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. FISH/WILDLIFE	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?			X			b.
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?			X			c.
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X		Yes	g.
h. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		X				
i. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		X				
j. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

b. There is potential to reduce the abundance of certain game species like pheasants, grey partridge, mule deer and antelope in this area. Species like sharptail grouse will benefit by the reseeded of native prairie and restoration of Section 19 into native prairie grasses and forbs.

c. Nongame species abundance may be impacted the same as the game species discussed above.

g. Wildlife may be stressed by the development of a visitor center. The amount of stress is mitigated by placement of the structures near the road and in areas which have been heavily impacted by agriculture however increased visitation will result in some disturbance of the various wildlife species in the area. Proper human behavior in areas of high wildlife values will be emphasized by the interpretative displays and brochures in the visitor center.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			a
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. Noise levels will be higher during construction but after construction is complete noise levels will be greatly reduced. Minor changes in noise levels is expected due to normal operation of the visitor center and visitation.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

◆◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. LAND USE  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of, or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?			X		yes	a.
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?			X		yes	d.
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. The project is only disturbing CRP which has been "out of production" for over 10 years, while the program has now expired and the land could be put back into other types of production FWP will continue production as it has occurred during the last 10 years. It is the intent to reseed any disturbed area with native plant species and some time in the future to cultivate the CRP section and reseed to native species.

d. The residents potentially effected by this development are the two neighboring families. These neighbors have the greatest potential for impacts due to increased visitation disturbance, vandalism, and overall impacts to their relatively remote ranches. FWP recognizes the potential impacts to these families lifestyles and will remain committed to solving any potential problems. FWP is incorporating comments that the neighbors have made into the development and management plans. FWP hopes this cooperative relationship can continue after the site has been developed.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

◆◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>*</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>c</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>*</sup>	None	Minor <sup>*</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other: <u>current random firearms use</u>		X				e.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

e. On park property near the county road switch back there is an area which is currently being used as a trespass area to discharge firearms( target shooting). Although this project does not create any known hazards, if the trespass shooting is allowed to continue more visitors may be exposed to firearm discharges. As part of this project the trespass firearm area will be closed to shooting, debris removed and the shooting closure enforced.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>⚡</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>⚡</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>⚡</sup>	None	Minor <sup>⚡</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?			X			c.
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X			e.
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

c. Employment will be increased a very small amount by the building of this visitor center and its employees, however support services like gas stations, campgrounds, restaurants, motels, and grocery stores will have a potential to increase their business or new business created due to the number of visitors actually passing through the town of Ulm.

e. Traffic through the north of the Interstate Highway is expected to significantly increase. Projections of visitation from other visitor center of similar size and mission lead FWP to estimate initial visitation at 40-50,000 visitors yearly. In 1995 nearly 10,000 people visited the site. This traffic is mostly expected to use the I-15 Ulm Exit at the Ulm-Vaughn Road as their access to the Ulm Pishkun visitor center. The Ulm-Vaughn Road may need additional maintenance or to be upgraded as a result of this increased traffic.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			X			a.
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?			X			b.
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?			X			d.
e. Define projected revenue sources		X				e.
f. Define projected maintenance costs.		X				f.
g. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. See the discussion of the potential increases on road maintenance on the previous page. There will be associated need for law enforcement and fire services for this type of state park public facility. With increased public use fire and police activity will be warranted.

b. Local tax bases should increase as new support businesses build and grow up to serve the Ulm Pishkun Visitors. Bed taxes revenues paid to motels, campgrounds, and hotels will grow as Great Falls and vicinity become more of a destination travel area.

d. Gasoline and electrical use will increase as more visitors use the relatively remote are west of Great Falls and north of Ulm. The education center will use electricity and propane for heating, cooling and lights.

e/f. Entrance and group use fees, book store revenues. Estimated future operations expenses for the park are \$50,000/yr. Revenue is estimated to be over \$26,000. The existing park budget is \$27,500. Any unfunded operation commitments would be offset by other park funding sources.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?				X	yes	a.
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?			X			b.
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational or tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X		yes	c.
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. The preferred visitor center location minimizes the disturbance to the view from the top of the Pishkun, however there is no place which will hide the visitor center from view. The building will be designed to be aesthetically pleasing, have low roof lines and use roofing and building materials that blend into and with the natural surroundings and have as small a visual impact as possible. The parking lots will be screened from view on the top of the jump as much as possible using the building itself to screen vehicles. Low growing vegetation native to the prairie environment will also be used as screening, but to hide larger vehicles expected to visit the site will be impossible. The design of the trail system on the top of the jump will attempt to orient the visitor's view to the south west and Square Butte. Intrusion to the viewshed from the top of the cliff is manageable but not totally avoidable.

Visual intrusion looking north at the ridge line of the Pishkun from the bottom will be minimal. The project will reduce visual intrusion by removing the existing structures on the skyline which are visible for miles approaching from the south. These structures will be removed and new vault latrine, road, shelters and parking facilities will be located to the north where a low hill will protect the view from the bottom of the cliff and the Ulm-Vaughn Road. Any new interpretive displays will be low lying and essentially hidden from view to the south.

b. This project will protect large areas of open space while impacting only a relatively small area. The area will be aesthetically impacted by this project but given that it is already being impacted at least this impact will be in keeping with the historical, cultural and agricultural nature of the area.

c. Recreational and Tourism opportunities will be increased in the Ulm area. Support facilities such as motels, convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants, and campgrounds will likely respond to support the tourists who seek services close to the Ulm Pishkun.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT*				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown*	None	Minor*	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?			X			b.
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ♦♦For P-B/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. Improper design and construction could have a large impact on the cultural values of this area. The visitor center is designed to enhance rather than take away from those cultural values, allowing more people to understand the importance of the site and area to the people who have lived here for many centuries.

b. Early in the planning process FWP learned of the importance of the top of the jump to certain tribal values. FWP went to great lengths to procure lands for building the visitor center to avoid impacting the top of the jump. FWP is committed to preserving the nature of the Pishkun.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT <sup>☆</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>☆</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>☆</sup>	None	Minor <sup>☆</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)			X		yes	a.
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?			X			e.
f. ♦For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

a. Many impacts of this project can be considered cumulative given the complexity of the proposed project. Montana State Parks is committed to reducing these potential impacts whenever the agency is able, however considerable minor impacts are likely to occur.

e. The developments at Ulm Pishkun State Park are an enhancement to the area which will have profound positive sustainable economic, social and cultural impacts to the community. The residents of the area have asked for a sustainable development which emphasizes the unique cultural values that this site represents while allowing for public use and enjoyment. The visitor center will teach the importance of the site to generations of people of many races and will help build a much needed bridge of understanding between the Native Peoples and other people. People of widely differing backgrounds and opinions have supported this project. The debate as to building on top of the jump will be mitigated through this action as the wishes of those not wanting development on top will be addressed.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

► Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.







**1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

**Part (A) Educational Visitor Center**

These alternatives relate to the building of an educational visitor center on or near the Ulm Pishkun State Park site.

**Alternative A.1- No Action.**

None of the potential benefits of the proposed action would occur, interpretive opportunities would not be developed upon, a facility which enhances the opportunity for Native Peoples to relate their culture to visitors would not be constructed, additional trail opportunities would not be added to the site, potential to prevent and control vandalism of sensitive cultural resources will not be addressed, the land would remain in its current state and no visual intrusions to the landscape would be created.

**Alternative A.2 - Build on top of the cliff.**

This alternative was discussed earlier in the recent 1232 acre land acquisition environmental assessment.

Originally the FWP preferred alternative was to build the center on the 170 acres currently controlled by FWP. This alternative was not acceptable to the Native People community due to the sacred nature of the lands on top of the jump and the concern for cultural remains which still may exist on top of the jump.

The alternative of building the center on FWP property off the top of the jump was explored and was found to be unacceptable because of several principal factors. 1) The strong position of the Native People community not to build on top. 2) Due to the soil types and the location of bedrock near the surface the expense of building a building on this location. 3) The building site did not allow for viewing of the jump or the jump face and 4) space at this location was limited and would not allow for all of the needed parking as well as for special events.

**Alternative A.3 - Build off the site.**

This alternative was also discussed earlier in the recent 1232 acre land acquisition environmental assessment.

There were also suggestions to build near or in the town of Ulm. Although this alternative would have had better access to the interstate and possibly to utilities it does not have a close relationship to the resource being interpreted and the center could not provide surveillance of the jump to reduce or eliminate vandalism to the site. This potential site had the additional drawback of adding to the site operational costs due to the need to provide staff at two geographically separate locations.

**Alternative A.4 - Build on Property located in Section 19.**

This alternative is the preferred alternative.

In 1996 1232 acres of land below the jump were added to Ulm Pishkun State Park. This land acquisition was done to further protect the aesthetic values of the site and to allow the opportunity to construct the visitor center off the sensitive area on the top of the jump site. Several locations within the new 1232 acres were considered. The northeast portion of Section 19 near the county road appeared to be the most logical location for the development of a visitor center and variations of that general location were developed for further evaluation. Considerations that led to this general location are the view of the jump face from below, the







lower cost of road and utility improvements, potential for nearby trail linkages, minimizing the visual impacts of the building/facilities from the top of the jump, and the northeast corner development of Section 19 will leave the flexibility of future land trades of southern portions of the new property for land more directly associated with the jump face and related cultural resources.

Changes in natural drainage patterns will be minimal and easily mitigated.

Clearances for this area has been granted by the SPHO (See attached).

Effect on wildlife movement in this area will be minimal, accept for the building itself no additional barriers will be erected. Total acreage affected will be not more than 6 acres which will include roads, parking, building space, amphitheater and trails.

This general northeast portion of Section 19 was further subdivided into three potential visitor center site locations for evaluation identified as sites "#1,#2,#3."

#### **SITE 1- This Is The Preferred Site in Section 19**

This alternative would place the visitor center nearest to the drama point of the buffalo jump, and maximizes visitor center interpretive effectiveness. Of the three sites this site will have the most impact looking southeast from the top of the jump and be the furthest from the county road, telephone, electrical lines and the entrance road would be slightly more expensive than the other alternatives.

However, this alternative would place the visitor closest to the jump while still maintaining a pleasing view from the top, allow some visitors to walk up to the cliff from below, allow linkages to existing trail systems and provide a variety of interpretive opportunities.

The hike to the cliff base would be approximately a mile long and up hill for the last third of the way. Of the site locations being considered this would offer the shortest pedestrian trail, however this hike may be considered too long of a walk for the average visitor. The visitor would be given the opportunity to view the cliffs and be provided with interpretation along the way as well as at the "drama" point as a reward for making the hike. The visitor would then be given the alternative to return to the center or continue to the top of the jump via a connecting trail.

#### **SITE 2**

This alternative splits the difference between sites 1&3. Costs for road and utility development are between those for sites 1 &3.

Site 2 struggles to provide enough detail to properly interpret the Pishkun from the visitor center but slightly reduces the visual impact of the visitor center on the view from the top of the Pishkun.

The trail will be longer than site 2 but shorter than site 1. The hike would be about a mile long and up hill for most of the last ½ mile. Most people will choose to not walk the full length because of the lack of interpretive reward for a considerable distance. All three alternatives have long hikes in order to gain significant personal rewards.

#### **SITE 3**

This alternative places the visitor center closest to the Ulm-Vaughn Road and is the least expensive alternative for road and utility development.

This alternative does not impact the view shed to the degree that site 1 does but still has an impact on the view from the top of the Pishkun to the SE.

The trail system required by this alternative is longer than site 1 by an eighth of a mile.







The hike would be nearly two miles long and up hill for most of the last mile. Most people will choose to not walk the full length because of the lack of interpretive reward for a considerable distance.

The opportunities for interpretation at the visitor center are more limited as the detailed views of the cliff face are mostly lost at this sighting distance and angle.

#### **Part (B) Developments on the upper Cliff.**

These alternatives analyze options for rehabilitation and removal of the visually intruding developments on the top of the Pishkun. These alternatives stand alone but are considered in conjunction with sites 1,2&3.

##### **Alternative B.1 - No Action**

This alternative leaves the current developments in place with no improvements or upgrades. This would leave the "rolling edge" of the cliff impacted by the visually unappealing shelters and interpretive node. The ability to interpret the events and drama of the buffalo jump from below would be severely impacted. Handicapped accessibility is limited to the upper portion of the site and no improvements for handicapped accessibility would be made.

##### **Alternative B.2 - Rehabilitation Alone**

This alternative would result in removal of the visually intruding developments on top of the buffalo jump including removing shelters and restrooms without replacing them. Rehabilitation would result in the "rolling edge" being more natural and better suited for interpretation than in Alternative B.1. Road access would be limited to the existing roadway and cul-de-sac. The entry road and auto parking as it currently exists would remain. Any of the trails alternatives would be suitable using this option.

##### **Alternative B.3 - Rehab and re-development.**

This alternative is the preferred alternative.

Alternative B.3 proposes to remove the developments on top of the Pishkun and replace them with higher grade accessible facilities under the crest of the hill to the north. This alternative puts the "rolling edge" of the cliff top back into its original natural state and restores the skyline's original look.

The vault toilet will be relocated and upgraded to the accessible state park standard. The existing cul-de-sac will be removed and rehabilitated. All cultural elements covered by previous developments will be uncovered and retained. Layout of the replacement facilities will be done taking cultural resources found in the area into consideration and avoiding impacts to those resources or mitigating the impact appropriately. During development of this area coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office will ensure that disturbance to cultural deposits does not occur or is appropriately mitigated. Additionally, impacts to the existing prairie dog town will be minimized in the design and layout of the area. A new road and cul-de-sac will lead to a new trail head. Parking will be approximately 4 parking stalls at the new trailhead and the remainder will be parallel on a widened section of road heading back out of the upper entrance. The total parking capacity is expected to range from 10 to 20 vehicles with handicap parking available at the trailhead.

#### **Part (C) Trail from Visitor Center to Upper Developments.**

These alternatives relate to the trail connecting the developments on top of the cliffs and the visitor center on the lower site. All three visitor center location alternatives have long hikes in order to gain







significant personal rewards, the question is how long is too long. Proper development could entice some people to use the trail who would not make the effort with improper trail design.

#### **Alternative C.1 - No action**

This alternative results in no trail connection from the visitor center to the top developments. Visitors would have to use their vehicles to travel by road to the top parking areas and drop off anyone wishing to see the cliff at close range. None of the benefits of a fairly long hike like exercise, challenge, personal satisfaction, would be achieved. Environmental and cultural damage might occur as visitors pioneer their own trails to reach the top of the cliff.

#### **Alternative C.2 - Limited Trail Development**

This is the preferred alternative.

This alternative provides a hiking trail and interpretive nodes between the visitor center and the developments on top however does not provide for full handicapped accessibility. The interpretive nodes located on the trail between the visitor center and the base of the jump would be handicapped accessible, however the trail between the base of the jump and the top of the jump would not be. This alternative seeks to protect the cultural and natural resources found in the area between the base of the jump and the top. The requirements for providing trails for mobility impaired individuals would require extensive cutting of the jump face to achieve proper slope, width and rest points for the trail surface.

#### **Alternative C.3 - Full Trail Development**

This trail alternative gives full use of the connecting trail to all who visit the site. Trail length is considerably longer because of the requirement for handicapped accessibility with the trail length anticipated to be over 2.5 miles.

Environmental and cultural damage may occur as visitors without handicaps pioneer trails across switchbacks. This alternative also has the highest potential for impacts to the natural surroundings, views, animal and plant life.

With trail length being very long many visitors will not use the trail because the length of the hike exceeds their abilities.







## **Part (D) Interpretive Trail on Cliff Top.**

These alternatives anticipate the desire of the public to recreate and learn about the use of the buffalo jump on the site where the events took place. Properly designed and implemented the interpretive trail could be run as self guided or as a guided trail.

### **Alternative D.1 - No Action**

Under this alternative there would be no new trail developments. The existing user defined trails and retrofitted interpretive trails would continue to serve the visitors to the site. Many visitors would not be able to reach the cliff face much less access the bench below the cliffs which served as the butchering and processing areas for the people who used the jump. Considerable environmental and cultural damage might occur as visitors pioneer new trails into areas not currently being used. Interpretation would not reach the majority of visitors and the educational benefits of visiting the site would be limited.

### **Alternative D.2 - Limited Development**

This is the preferred Alternative.

This trail alternative gives a wide range of trail and interpretive options. A handicapped accessible trailhead begins the interpretive process and accessible trails would be constructed on top of the cliff giving a reasonable and interpretively satisfying experience for those unable, or unwilling, to venture below the cliff edge. For those who are more adventurous a trail with more limited development would go below the cliff edge and provide most visitors with a rich interpretive experience which tells the story of those who used the buffalo jump. All visitors will benefit by the learning opportunities given at the trailhead and the trail will build on the themes presented there. All visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy the "drama point" identified in the charette planning process with expansive views of the Square Butte, and four other mountain ranges as well as the prairies below.

This alternative is in between the costs represented by Alternatives D.1 and D.3 but probably is closer to Alternative D.3.

### **Alternative D.3 - Full Handicapped Accessibility.**

This alternative makes all trails located on top accessible to all. Alternative D.3 would be augmented by the addition of handicapped accessible trails below the cliff face as well as on top. By necessity this would lengthen the trails system to bring the trails to grade. This would also result in a very expensive trails system. Environmental and cultural damage might occur as visitors cut the switchbacks made necessary by the higher standards. This alternative is the most expensive trails alternative and could result in visible impacts to the exposed grassy slope.

## **2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

### **Mitigation includes:**

- ◆ Reseeding of any disturbed areas with native prairie grasses and forbs
- ◆ Design the building and parking lots to minimized the disturbance to the viewshed when possible
- ◆ Remove and rehabilitate existing disturbances to the skyline viewshed.







3. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

An EIS is not required.

With few anticipated significant impacts to the environment or the public the EA is the appropriate level of analysis.

4. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

Public involvement for this project has been functioning in various degrees for over ten years. One of the catalysts for the public involvement was a public meeting sponsored by the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce Conventions and Visitors Bureau in 1989. Here interested public were welcomed to participate in a facilitated public forum to give the local community and FWP direction in the future of the state park.

Subsequently, effort was made to verify the archaeological significance of the cultural resources. This involved cooperative initiatives of local service clubs, volunteers, Cascade County Historical Society and FWP to conduct archaeological digs in 1992 and 1994 by Montana State University. The results of this archaeological study indicated a very significant pre-historic cultural resource being present. Following this was local interest and collaboration with Ted Turner Ranches in putting the rest of the nearly mile long buffalo jump in public ownership which involved a complicated trade with Turner Ranches and DNRC - Trust Lands Management Division.

For nearly a year beginning in August of 1994, the FWP conducted a series of public conceptual planning meetings with planning consultant Charette Collaborative. In this process advisory group meetings were held with both Native Peoples and local interest groups. Near the end of the conceptual planning phase, in February 1996, it became apparent that the Native Peoples advising FWP could not accept the visitor center site on the top of the cliff.

FWP held additional public meetings for the acquisition of property below the cliff so the visitor center could be built below; complying with the wishes of the Native Peoples. The public also has had opportunity to express their concerns through the legislative process, specifically legislative committee hearings, which has appropriated funds for constructing a visitor center.

Because of a combination of all these related issues the public had many opportunities to reflect on the interpretive values and desires to develop an educational visitor center at the state park.

An additional public meeting open house will be held 7pm - 9pm, Tuesday, August 26, 1997 at the FWP Region Headquarters Public Meeting Room, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT to give opportunity to comment on this EA. Compiled notes of comments received at this public meeting and all written comments on this EA will be attached in the appendices.

5. Duration of comment period if any:

30 days from announcement.







**6. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:**

David D. Todd  
Parks Program Manager  
Region Four FWP  
P.O. Box 6610  
Great Falls, MT. 59406 (406)454-5840

Dan Smith  
Parks Operation Specialist  
Region Four FWP  
P.O. Box 6610  
Great Falls, MT. 59406 (406)454-5840

Ken Soderberg  
Resource Program Manager  
Parks Division Office  
FWP  
1420 E. 6th Ave.  
Helena, MT. 59620 (406)444-3750







### PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The primary purpose of this action is to construct an approximately 6,000 sq. ft. educational visitor center with utilities. Parking would be up to 100 cars some of which would be informal parking. Also included would be an amphitheater and open space group use (pow-wow) area which may include utilities. Trail alternatives are many and varied with a variety of options presented in the environmental assessment. We plan to replace the CRP vegetation with native short-grass species in the vicinity of the visitor center and along interpretive trails.

The project will need appropriate land negotiations with DNRC - Trust Lands Management Division to provide more direct linkage of trails, enhance cultural/interpretive opportunities and consolidate FWP managed property at the jump site.

FWP feels that Part (A) Building Alternative A.4, Site 1, Part (B) Connecting Trail Alternative B.3, Part (C) Cliff Top Development Alternative C.2 and Part (D) Cliff Top Interpretive Trail Alternative D.2 best meets the goals and objectives of this project in conjunction with the expressed desires of the public in over two years of planning effort. This preferred set of alternatives gives a wide variety of interpretive experiences while preserving the essential character of the land. People of a wide variety of backgrounds will be able to have a very satisfying interpretive experience.

#### Synopsis of Preferred Alternatives

Item	Alternative	Narrative
Part A Building	A.4 Building Site 1 Page 21	Build in Section 19 on site 1 (see map exhibit ##)
Part B Upper Cliff Facilities	B.3 Page 22	Restore the "rolling edge" of the top to it's original nature by removing existing facilities from the top of the Piskun including restrooms, shelters, road and parking. Replace restrooms with handicapped accessible vault latrine, do not replace shelters, reconfigure road and cul-de-sac to accommodate 10 to 20 vehicles.
Part C Connecting Trail	C.2 Page 23	Develop connecting trail between visitor center and cliff bottom, trail will be handicapped accessible, develop trail link between cliff bottom and top of jump this trail development will not be fully accessible.
Part D Cliff Top Interpretive	D.2 Page 24	Restore interpretive developments on the top of the pishkun, develop handicapped accessible trails, maintain low profile signing.

FWP also believes this set of alternatives achieves the goals of this educational visitor center with the fewest impacts to the land. Although some impacts are irreconcilable there is considerable improvement to the viewsheds from the bottom of the cliff, rehabilitation of fairly large portions short grass prairie, and few impacts to native wildlife and plant species.







**Montana Department  
of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



Date: July 30, 1997

Clint Blackwood, Tourism Development  
Montana Promotion Division  
Department of Commerce  
1424 9th Avenue  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Re: Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)/HB 495  
Tourism Report

Dear Clint:

Attached for your information and completion is a MEPA / HB 495 Tourism Report form. This form is used when the Montana Environmental Quality Act review is initiated and when a park or fishing access site improvement or development project meets the criteria directed by HB 495 and identified in 12.8.602 (1) Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM).

Please complete and sign the bottom portion of the form using the considerations identified in the shaded area. If you have questions or would like to discuss details, you can call me at (406)454-5840 in Great Falls.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

David D. Todd  
Region Park Manager  
Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
P.O. Box 6610  
Great Falls, MT 59406

Attachment  
cc: Helena HB 495 Coordinator







MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB 495  
TOURISM REPORT

**Use this form when the Montana Environmental Policy Act review is initiated and when a park or fishing access site (FAS) improvement or development project meets the criteria directed by HB 495 and identified in 12.8.602(1) Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM). Submit this form for completion to:**

Clint Blackwood, Tourism Development  
Montana Promotion Division  
Department of Commerce  
1424 9th Avenue  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

**Project Name:** Ulm Pishkun State Park Educational Visitor Center

**Project Description:** FWP is proposing to develop an educational visitor center to educate the public of the importance of this site to Native Peoples and their relationship with the North American bison. Ulm Pishkun is arguably the largest example of a bison jump in North America and has outstanding opportunities for education and interpretation of the methods, practices, and traditions of using bison by many tribal groups.

The proximity of the interstate highway and food and lodging opportunities in nearby Great Falls gives the site potential for serving a wide variety of visitors. Great Falls has a high population of Urban Native Peoples and the site can provide insight into their tribal heritage. A major goal of the center is to build bridges between cultures through greater understanding of Native People traditions.

It is estimated that 22,000 school children live within a two hour drive of the site. This is a unique opportunity to interpret a variety of subjects from prehistory to modern settlement that spans literally thousands of years of human use of the site. This facility will be designed to aid in the passing of knowledge including tribal traditions and customs, and the archaeological record. Interpretive techniques likely to be used will include exhibits, demonstrations, pow- wows, story telling by Native Peoples, interpretive trails, etc.

This action considers constructing an approximate 6000 sq. ft. visitor center, trails and interpretive panels, small outdoor amphitheater, designated group use area (pow wows, etc.), and parking facilities with handicap access.

In the past FWP has attempted to interpret the area using small trails-based outdoor interpretive panels. The vagrancies of weather, and security issues have rendered this type of interpretive development less effective since people are not able to use the site seasonally or during times of inhospitable weather. A lack of FWP site presence has resulted in high vandalism to both FWP developments and the cultural deposits at the site. The development of the visitor center will result in higher FWP and public presence which will result in lower vandalism on the cultural deposits and developments due to increased awareness of the importance of this site and by increasing understanding by the local residents of the importance of this resource.







For over fifteen years various persons and interest groups have expressed interest having more at the Ulm Pishkun. There has been a general dissatisfaction with the lack of facilities and interpretation at this unique cultural resource. Beginning 1992, with a collaborative effort of the Cascade County Historical Society, MSU and FWP, a series of archaeological digs had reveal that this buffalo jump has the significance of being possibly the largest buffalo jump in North America. Consequently public demand began to grow resulting in the FWP beginning a public planning process in August, 1994. To begin this planning process meetings were held with Native People tribal representatives for focus and direction. At the initial public scoping meeting many public comments were encouraging FWP to treat the existing landscapes with greatest sensitivity as possible.

12.8.604(1) ARM:

- i. tourism is defined as the guidance or management of tourists (residents and nonresidents), who are the individuals who make tours for pleasure or education; and,
- ii. site development projects will be sent to the department of commerce with a request for review as to the impacts on tourism economy.

MEPA:

Human Environment. 11:

- c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?

Considering (1) ii under ARM rules and MEPA Human Environment 11, listed above, describe how this project will impact the tourism economy:

TRAVEL MONTANA STRONGLY ANTICIPATES THAT THE proposed Ulm Pishkun developments will have a positive impact on the tourism economy - of both the Great Falls area and to a lesser degree, the entire state. Visiting historical and cultural sites is high on the list of what visitors want when travelling to Montana. The new Ulm Pishkun State Park Educational Visitors Center will be a welcome facility.

Signature

*Jeff L. Schurman*

Date

*8/4/97*

Please return to P.O. Box 6610, Great Falls, MT 59406

cc: Helena HB 495 Coordinator







STN 955.1

**Montana Department  
of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



1539 East Eleventh Ave. - 4th Floor  
PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701

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August 28, 1996

Paul Putz, Preservation Officer  
State Historic Preservation Office  
P.O. Box 201202  
Helena, Montana 59620-1202

Dear Paul:

The Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks is proposing to construct a Visitor Center at the Ulm Pishkun State Park. Previously we had submitted some Preliminary Conceptual Plans to your office for your information. Since those plans were sent, we have had additional discussions with our Native American Cultural Advisory Committee. The Committee, in discussion with Tribal Elders, concluded that the top of the jump site was sacred and recommended that the Visitor Center not be built on top. Out of respect for the beliefs of the Tribe, the Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks is purchasing private property below the jump, on which we are proposing to build the Visitor Center.

Attached is a Cultural Resourcing Inventory Report for the new proposed Visitor Center location.

Please review this report and the proposed project, and provide us with your comments. Call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

PAUL VALLE  
Cultural Resources Coordinator  
Field Services Division  
PV:co

CONCUR  
MONTANA SHPO  
DATE 9/4/96 SIGNED

Attachment

RES.  
DEPT. OF







CHAPLIN  
OSIE  
CUB 100



JOHNSON

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MADE IN U.S.A.